Wyoming Department of Education

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CALCULATION OF SAFE HARBOR

All Wyoming schools have a goal to increase student achievement. At the very least, schools want to meet "Safe Harbor" in order to avoid being designated as a school in need of improvement. The calculation of Safe Harbor is a bit more complex than a simple 10% increase in student performance. Therefore, it is vitally important that you understand how Safe Harbor is calculated. If you have any questions, please contact either Laurel Ballard at laurel.ballard@wyo.org or a member of the district support and coordination team.

Before Safe Harbor can be calculated, a school must meet the Additional Indicator for the subgroup trying to meet safe harbor.

Grades 3-8:   The additional indicator is the reduction in the percentage of students reading in the below basic category from the previous year.

Grade 11:   The additional indicator is growth in the graduation rate. Additional information on how the graduation rate is calculated can be found on the WDE website.

If a school meets their additional indicator and participation rates for the subgroup, Safe Harbor can then be calculated. To determine Safe Harbor, you need to look at two years of PAWS data.

The question that must be answered is, **"Has the school or LEA made a DECREASE in the number of NON-PROFICIENT students - those in the below basic and basic categories — that is statistically equivalent to 10% since last year?"** The percentage of students testing non-proficient last year is compared to the number of students testing non-proficient this year to determine whether there has been a 10% decrease between last year and this year.

An important distinction needs to be made. The question of "has the school or LEA made an increase in the number of

proficient students that is statistically equivalent to 10%" is NOT the same as looking for a 10% decrease in non-proficient students.

An example that might help illustrate this important difference is when a school had 72% of their students proficient last year. This means that 28% of the students were non-proficient. In order to make safe harbor, the school needs to have a 10% decrease in the number of non-proficient students. That means 28% x 10% = 2.8%. If you subtract 2.8 from 28 you get 25.2. That means that the school would have to have 25.2% or fewer of its students with non-proficient results.

If a person was **incorrectly** calculating that they would have to have a 10% increase in the number of students proficient, they would take 72% x 10% to get 7.2%. That would mean 72% plus the 7.2 % would be 79.2% of students would have to be proficient. That would leave 20.8% of students as non-proficient. That would be a much higher goal than would actually be necessary.